



County of Los Angeles

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March 21, 2003

To: Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, Chair
Supervisor Gloria Molina
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Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: David E. Janssen
Chief Administrative Officer

FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Bioterrorism Funding

Yesterday, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced that the County will receive a direct allocation totaling \$40,114,596 in bioterrorism funding this year. Of the total, \$24,531,232 would be available for public health preparedness and \$15,583,364 for hospital preparedness.

The funds represent the second round of bioterrorism grants. In January 2002, the County received a similar amount for public health. The hospital grant for this year is nearly a five-fold increase over the \$3.6 million received in 2002. Similar to last year, only three other local jurisdictions received direct funding: Chicago, New York City, and Washington, DC. Similar to last year's process, the County will be eligible to receive up to 20 percent of its grant immediately, with the remaining amount disbursed upon receipt and approval of a plan outlining the activities to be funded. The application procedures are to be released by HHS next week. Attached is the HHS press release announcing the grants.

Ryan White AIDS Funding

This week, HHS announced that Los Angeles County will receive \$39,994,550 in direct funding in Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2003 under Title I of the Ryan White CARE Act. Fifty-one metropolitan areas most affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic will receive direct grants. This year's grant is a five percent increase over the \$37,963,755 allocated to the County in FFY 2002.

FFY 2004 House Budget Resolution

Today, the House adopted its FFY 2004 budget resolution (H. Con. Res. 95) by a vote of 215-212. The budget, which sets non-binding revenue and spending targets to guide committee action on Federal fiscal legislation, preserves the Administration's \$726 billion tax relief package. It also contains instructions to the Energy and Commerce Committee that would cut projected Medicaid spending by about \$92 billion and the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) by about \$2 billion over the next ten years. About \$200 billion in proposed cuts to the growth in Medicare were struck from the bill, due to the objections of Republican moderates.

The Senate is continuing debate on its budget resolution (S. Con. Res. 23). The vote on final passage may take place today and is expected to be very close. Included in the Senate budget is an amendment passed last night by a vote of 80-19 expressing the "Sense of the Senate" that any stimulus package include not less than \$30 billion for State fiscal relief over the next 18 months. At least one-half of the amount would be provided through a temporary increase in the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) share of the Medicaid program. A Sense of the Senate resolution, however, is non-binding. Once the Senate completes its budget resolution, a conference committee will meet to resolve differences between the House and Senate versions.

San Gabriel River Watershed Study Act

This week, the House adopted by voice vote a bill (H.R. 519), sponsored by Representative Solis (D-CA), authorizing the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resources study of the San Gabriel River and sections of the San Gabriel Mountains. The study would determine how the Federal government can improve the area's recreational and environmental opportunities, taking into consideration flood control, drainage and public infrastructure needs. Subject to funding by the Interior Department, the bill requires local governments to be consulted during the study.

Senator Boxer has introduced a companion bill (S. 630). That bill has not been considered in the Senate.

Washington, D.C. Security

With the start of war in Iraq, security in the nation's capital has increased. Tours of the White House have been suspended and security around Federal buildings has increased significantly. Group tours of the Capitol are only allowed if they are scheduled well in advance through a Congressional office. No self-guided or individual tours of the Capitol building are allowed. Our Washington Advocates report, however, that individuals on official business with the Administration or Congress continue

Each Supervisor
March 21, 2003
Page 3

to have access to all Federal buildings, including the Capitol and the White House. That access may be subject to change, if events warrant even higher security.

We will continue to keep you advised of any new developments.

DEJ:GK
RT:TJ:MT:lm

Attachment

c: Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
 County Counsel
 All Department Heads
 Legislative Strategist